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INFORMATION  
September 3, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Norman Cousins' Trip to Nigeria/Biafra

As you authorized, I told Norman Cousins today by telephone that there is no objection to his proceeding on his own to explore Gowon's and Ojukwu's positions. He is leaving for Nigeria in the next few days,

Cousins intends to ask each of them for his views on what role the U.S. might play in advancing the possibilities for meaningful negotiations. His approach to Ojukwu will be the more specific, asking what kind of proposals the U.S. might make and whether the U.S., or any other nation or nations, should have a role in the talks themselves. He will also make disclaimers to both to the effect that the U.S. has no desire to interfere where it is not wanted.

Cousins will say that he is asking his questions on his own, but has reason to believe that they would find encouragement by the U.S. Government in efforts to negotiate a settlement.

If Gowon and Ojukwu responded positively, we can then give confirmation.

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